

## EVANGELICAL INQUIRER.

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"There is one body, and one Spirit, as also ye are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all, and with all, and in" all Christians.—PAUL the Apostle—McKnight's translation.

*Extract from a private letter addressed by Bishop A. Campbell, to a friend in Cincinnati.*

"BETHANY, Va. Sept. 17, 1830.

"Dear Brother—

Nothing but the unconquerable control of circumstances, has so long prevented me the pleasure of conversing with you on paper, at least for a few minutes. This has been one of my busiest summers.—The calls for *speaking* as well as for *writing* have been still more numerous than formerly. I have in these vicinities labored more this summer than in any year for the last ten. Congregations are very large, seldom less than a *thousand* hearers—and think it not incredible that in the county of Brooke, last Lord's day, I saw about 5000 persons assembled to *hear the word*, and to see its effects. It was a *three day meeting*, and brother Scott and I alternated in succession during three days. About 300 or 350 disciples broke the loaf of blessing in the morning of the day—and in the intervals of the meeting, 26 persons were immersed. The wounded to the killed were as five to one. After one discourse the Lord's day preceding, in about one thousand hearers, thirteen were immersed: the day before that, out of *three thousand*, in Ohio, thirty-seven. In another vicinity, after a single discourse on Lord's day, fourteen were immersed: So mightily grows the word of the Lord in these parts. Since I visited your city, I have with my own hands immersed 113 persons—besides, many are immersed by others. The sects are falling apace and their influences wither in society. I have been as much astonished at the reforming power of the

ancient gospel on the converts, as in its converting power. The disciples are filled with joy and the fruits of righteousness. Indeed the citizens of the kingdom of Jesus ought always to rejoice, and abound in all good works. So good, so kind, and so divine a master as our King is worthy of the adoration of the heart, of the most grateful incense of our warmest affections."

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THE PRESENT ORDER OF THINGS.—NO. 3.

Our last essay, embracing the modern system of teaching, developed some of the causes of its inefficacy. But half has not been said upon that subject that can be said. We must resume it.

The existing plan of teaching has not succeeded in accomplishing the designs of christian instruction, on account of the following notions and practices, viz: The establishment of the order of clergy; the notion of their divine call and exclusive privileges, and the system of scrap preaching; as has been proved. In addition to these I adduce another reason.

The practice of *spiritualizing* the sacred writings is an abuse of them and an error in teaching. The extent of this is alarming. Among the thousands of religious teachers of limited education and information there are very few exceptions, and they extend it generally to all the inspired books, and almost every part of them. The system is food for disordered imaginations and supersatious minds. But the practice is not confined to the unlearned. The clergy of every sect in Christendom extend it just to suit their *isms*: not their notions to the scriptures, but the scriptures to their notions. From Henry to Swedenborg and from Scott to Gill, the pupils of the ancient and mysticizing Origin, all the intervening grades of commentators, including these great names, were more or less, spiritualizers. All parties, it would appear, deny the intelligibility of the scriptures in whole or in part, and this had undoubtedly caused the practice so universally to prevail,

The whole difficulty, when examined, is found to be solvable by a proper rule or system of interpretation, the want of which has led the ancients into innumerable difficulties and consequently the moderns, for these evils are hereditary. When the dark ages commenced, and even before, thousands of causes conspired to impede christian conquest over ignorance and vice.— Even then the *philosophic fever* or propensity to fathom the illimitable doctrine of causation in all its bearings, in nature, morality, and religion, had possessed the people. The decline, first of the Grecian and afterwards of the Roman empires, was succeeded by the equally rapid decline of literature, which rendered metaphysical research eminently hazardous. Christians, not contented with the simple facts, duties and promises of Christ, must explain all the good book, which in those days required literary and historical acquirements. Not content with expounding the amount to which they were adequate, they despatched the remainder by spiritualizing or mysticizing it: This was the origin of the plan. The mystical notions of Jewish Rabbins and Pagan philosophers, gave an accelerated impetus to the spiritualizing system. Soon it became fashionable, and when that is the case, it is as easy to account for its extended popularity, as it is to account for any of our peculiarities in dress. He that leads the fashion is a brave fellow, and it was because Origin succeeded so well in spiritualizing, that he was so much lauded in the midnight of the church. Within a few years, science and literature have emerged from the deathly gloom of monkery's reign, and shed their influences upon millions on thousands of subjects. Spiritualizing, too, has suffered from the light, yet not in the same proportion as many other malpractices.— It yet is resorted to by the ignorant, by all who have an object to gain *out of* the bible, and by many of the unwary who are governed by the prejudices of early association.

Where is the necessity of this practice? I cannot see

any, but on the supposition that we must resort to it to support our peculiarity against the assaults of an enemy whom we cannot meet with argument. If this is all that can be said for it, every honest man will say let it go down. I know it gives ample room to our ingenuity, and I also know that falsehood has more use for ingenuity than truth.

If all that has been said on the subject is insufficient to make the practice fulfil the lineal characters of the proposition at the head of this piece, I will offer one proof that settles the question. Many can be produced, but I choose to risk the issue upon one strong one. Paul asserts in I. Cor. ii. 13, that "his teaching was with the words taught by the Holy Spirit, explaining spiritual things with spiritual words." Now this is as much as to say that the scriptures are spiritual or spiritualized already. Surely after coming finished from the Spirit's hand, it needs no human operation. All that is required of us is to use one common sense to understand the plain message, and practice it.

To read a few spiritualizing sermons, or the spiritual meaning of a few passages would be sufficient, I would think, to convince any person not only that the system is improper, but also that it is an outrage upon common sense. Its origin speaks not well of its character. The serpent was the first spiritualizer, and exercised his mystic talent upon the first positive law of God in the government of man. The decree of heaven ran, "eat not of the interdicted tree or you die." Satan said "ye shall not *surely* die." Not *surely* die—not certainly—not literally, &c. All the spiritual meanings of passages boasting modern origin are as palpably erroneous as this, the first born of mystic speeches. To multiply examples, were to be too tedious. Most of the places of worship in christendom, furnish, in their periodical harangues, soul-sickening evidence to attest the correctness of these remarks.

An attempt to spiritualize the word, which is sharper, in its injunctions and discriminations, than any double



edged and pointed sword, is a denial of revealed religion—rebellion against the revelation of Jesus Christ. If christianity be a revelation from heaven, it need not, it cannot be revealed by spiritualizing. A revealed revelation, is, in nature, an anomaly and in description, an abortion. Again, on the supposition that this practice were admissible, in what uncertainty would we be involved? Left to an arbitrary system of interpretation, capable of producing as great diversity of meanings as there are tastes to suit, the tone of religious feeling among us must be depressed, and all morality and obligation hazarded. But surely here all argument is unnecessary. This matter must be plain.

But, let us inquire, are the christian scriptures so unintelligible as to require this or any similar expedient to illustrate them? If so, God has mocked us, which he cannot do. If so, whom has he authorized to spiritualize? Has he commissioned all the conflicting mystics? You answer, that is impossible. Then who can come forward urging an exclusive *ius divinum* to make plain the unintelligibilities of Jesus Christ? But enough has been said. The living word means what it says, or it means nothing at all.

From what we have written, which has necessarily been but little, it must appear, that this unauthorized art of spiritualizing God's word, comparable only with the mysterious art by which the Egyptian sorcerers withstood the mission of Moses, has operated largely to render inefficacious the modern system of religious teaching. I shall furnish just one sample of the modern kind, extracted from a letter to the editor of the "Western Pioneer," and published in that paper:

"You cannot conceive the great need of a good, intelligent, and faithful preacher of the Baptist order in this county. Such an one I hope you will be able to send us soon. Those we have here make strange havoc of the gospel, by an allegorical, spiritualizing method, of which I will give you the following sample.—

The subject was the history of the man going from Jerusalem to Jericho, who fell among thieves. This was his subject. The heads were as follows: The falling among thieves, meant the fall of Adam—they stripped him and left him half dead—stripped him of all power to help himself, as *half* dead means *spiritually* dead, but *naturally* alive. The Levite that passed by, meant the ceremonial law, which could do no good—the priest meant the moral law, and it could not give life. The good Samaritan meant *Christ*, who could relieve. He took the wounded man up and poured in the oil and wine—the grace of God—put him on his own beast, his own gospel platform—took him to an inn, the church—gave the host two pence, the Old and New Testament—and promised to reward him. This reward was to be in another world, &c.”

More on the subject of modern teachings hereafter.  
Adieu. EDITOR.

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#### THE VOICE OF THE SPIRIT.

We are indebted to the Holy Spirit for the writings of Moses, the prophets and apostles, and indeed every supernatural truth we possess, has reached us through the great revealing spirit. From the first promise of a Saviour till the prophetic scroll was written out, in the apocalyptic vision of John, every discovery above nature we owe to the Holy Spirit, and therefore all the good that arises from a knowledge of his word, and all the happy effects that follow the belief and obedience of it, we are willing to attribute to the favor of the Holy Spirit. “For who of men knows the depths of a man, except the spirit of man which is in him, so also the depths of God no one knows, except the Spirit of God.” (To the end of the chap.)

The volume of inspiration is the audible *voice* of the Holy Spirit; no one hears him, nor feels his influence, but through symbols, or language, leaving distinct impressions, or ideas, on the mind. Encircled in that light which is inapproachable, and which no eye can see,

he never puts forth his hand upon the spirit of man but to write his law of liberty and of love upon it, and this he does by the word, in adapting it to our understandings, he impresses it upon our hearts. He never utters his voice to the ear of man, but it issues from that word which the Spirit has given us, bringing life and salvation to our guilty race. How did Lycurgus write his laws upon the minds of the Spartans? In a physical or mystical manner? Or rather was it not by giving a faithful record of them, and requiring a hearty attention, and unreserved obedience to them? Did they not give him the praise due for the happiness they diffused, and the good that arose out of them? It should also be remembered, that all the fruits that grow out of the belief and obedience of the word, are in fact the production of the Holy Spirit. When the word promises, the spirit promises, or invites, 'tis the spirit's invitation, commands, it is the spirit that commands. Thus every address made to us in the word, is made by the author of it, that is the Holy Spirit, just as any address made to a son by a father in a letter he may send him, is the voice, the words of the father. We never separate the spirit of man from his words, unless the individual speaking or writing deceives us, and then we say his words and his spirit are at variance; they are not one, they are two. It would be equally improper to separate the spirit of God from his own words, unless we believe he intends to deceive us, and who dare harbor such a presumptuous idea! The mind of the spirit is found fully disclosed in his word, and were he to speak audibly from the heavens to each one of us, what more could he say than that what he has said. Would it be more plain, or more authoritative? Were he ever to add any thing to what he has already said, it would be in keeping with it, and it would be given us in language, and embodied on paper. Were he to revise it, nothing but words and ideas would remain, and as he does not choose to speak outright from the skies, nor yet in a

secret manner, to the children of men, for then all beyond christendom would know him, and the son of his love. We are forced to the conclusion that the *only* sound that reaches our ears or touches our hearts from the Holy Spirit, is that which is heard in his own word. Here is the vantage ground upon what the spirit of man and the spirit of God once more meet, as our first parents and their Creator conversed face to face through the medium of language. So are we by the word permitted to hear the monitory voice of the good spirit, and if not among the trees of the garden, yet in a more rich and variegated field he appears to us, and at morning, noonday, or eventide, he is ever present, and by his word, we are able to hold audience with him. Here we may listen to his still small voice, that quickens, purifies and regenerates our hearts, that directs us to the path of life, the high road to immortality. May we ever give a listening ear to it, and obey his voice.

Even the wicked and the licentious hesitate in their downward way, and tremble, while they listen to the voice of God, in his word. In defiance of all their doubts and infidelity, rottenness sometimes enters into their bones, and the terrors of the Almighty seize upon them, at the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, by the word of the spirit. Witness the burning tears, the aching heart, the corroding fears, they are the subjects of. O solitude, how often hast thou recorded the resolution entered into, the vicious company forsworn, the sinful practices denounced by those who have been rebuked by the voice of the spirit. And midnight! couldst thou but disclose the scene of wretchedness thou hast witnessed, the groans thou hast heard, and the tossings of the troubled breast thou hast seen under the awful apprehension of a dread eternity, revealed by the Holy Spirit, surely no one would call in question the power of God, or speak again of the impotence of the spirit's word.

PHILO.

## TO THE MIAMI AND MADRIVER BAPTIST ASSOCIATIONS. No. II.

*Brethren:*

As the subject of faith is one of those many subjects upon which you suppose me to be unsound, as it is a subject of much importance, and, in my humble judgment, not sufficiently understood by several of your leading teachers, I shall here devote a few pages of the *Inquirer* to the consideration of it. I hope your old and experienced teachers will allow me to speak freely and plainly; and, though little more than a quarter of a century has passed me by—"let no man despise my youth."

There is an unintelligible phrase in common use among you, which I hope you will hereafter entirely relinquish. How often do you hear it said—"Faith is not the act of the creature, it is the gift of God." Now, I call this language unintelligible and absurd, because, as it stands and is used, there is not a clear and perspicuous idea in it. *Faith is not the act of the creature!* Whose act then is it? To have faith, is to believe, and to believe, requires that somebody *act*: and it is he that believes that *acts*. He that says faith is not a man's own act, resembles him who says a man does not do what he does, or does not eat what he eats; or him who says that drinking water is the same as swimming in water. But in this popular phrase, *the act of the creature*, is opposed to *the gift of God*, so that we must understand faith to be—*not the act of the creature*, consequently that of the Creator! Such unlearned phrases as these have done incalculable mischief to the people of God—their minds have been bewildered, and weakened, and injured.

But let us be a little more particular. "Abraham believed God." But Abraham was a creature. Therefore, a creature believed God, or acted faith. Let me now ask: was Abraham's faith the act of a creature? You all must say yes. But you say, we never denied all this. I reply, why then use such

language? We know that your common sense, as well as the scriptures, render it impossible for you to deny the above conclusions—we therefore hope you will dispense with the use of a language that is nothing but a vain sound, words without ideas, and adopt a pure speech.

But that I may persuade you effectually from the use of this Ashdodic dialect, let me further observe: It is the act of the creature man to eat and drink in order to animal existence; but it is no less his act to eat and drink the bread and water of life. It may not be his own act to prepare his victuals, but if ~~HE~~ do not eat he must starve to death. It surely is not his act to prepare the bread and water of life, but he must receive this divine nutrition or be forever under the reign and tyranny of death. To hope, to fear, to love, to hate, to rejoice, to believe, are all human acts, as well as eating, sitting, running, walking, reading, ploughing or reaping. And a man acts as really in mind or mentally, as he acts with his body, or corporally.

Again: If the creature does not act faith, who does? In all the wide world there are none but creatures whose act believing is. Will any one say the Creator believes for the creature? This would be folly of an unparalleled degree. Each man believes for himself—there is none that can do it for him: he *can*: he *must* believe.

Once more: A man not only acts faith, but it is the voice of divine truth to him if he do not believe, that he shall be condemned.

Thus you will see that I have fully demonstrated, not only that this phrase is an improper one and tends to gender confusion, but that it is not true in its first assertion. If the first member of the sentence means as it says, then the doctrine it teaches is manifestly false; and if it have some other meaning, then it is vain to use it. So that, as far as I have now proceeded with



this subject, I believe it is impossible for you to dissent with any propriety.

But I am aware that I have not yet touched the main thing that produces so much and such frequent uneasiness. I have said little or nothing about the cause of faith, or what produces it, and I shall therefore now hasten to this point.

In order that faith may be produced in the mind or heart of a man, it is requisite, 1, That there be a narrative of something said or performed. 2, That this narrative be suitably confirmed or rendered credible. And 3, That this narrative be reported so as to be read or heard. Take the following illustration. Suppose that I am this moment informed that in an island of the South Sea, a new and precious fruit has been discovered by some English traders—that this fruit grows on trees that overspread an half acre of ground, and that each apple will make a barrel of cider and that this kind of drink conduces much to the longevity of him who is so happy as to take it. Now, here is a *narrative*; but it is incapable of being believed, that is, I have not power to believe it—it is incredible. But it is not incredible in the very nature of it. It is rendered so by some extraneous circumstances. I have not heard this story through a direct medium—it has not been confirmed. Consequently I suspend my faith until the proper documents or confirmatives are presented; or rather, I cannot believe till such times as the testimony is confirmed or rendered credible.

All historic facts that have been made credible, we, of course believe. That there was a man called Homer, another called Virgil, and another called Cæsar, we all believe, because the histories of these men testify of them, and have been sufficiently confirmed by proper vouchers. In short, we are made able to believe these and other histories of facts and truths, because they have been authenticated and confirmed, and without confirmation no report can be rationally believed.

Now let us introduce the gospel among men. It is proclaimed to the nations, and at its first sound seems absurd. But the apostles declare the fact that Jesus of Nazareth arose from the dead—that, having been acquainted with him before his crucifixion, they saw him again after he arose, talked with him, felt him, ate and drank with him, conversed forty days with him, and saw him ascend into heaven. Of these things, say they, “we are his witnesses unto the people.” But the testimony of the apostles to these facts, was deemed incredible by many, till it was confirmed; but “signs and wonders, and mighty deeds,” confirmed their testimony in all the places where they preached the gospel, so that the report of it was rendered a credible report—that is men were empowered to believe it. “And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with, and confirming the word with signs following.” Men were enjoined to believe the gospel, but they were enabled to do so, because its truth was demonstrated before them, that their faith might not stand in the wisdom or philosophy of men, but in the power of God.

I will therefore say, that when Jesus is believed, when the whole testimony concerning him is accredited, this is the true faith. I am aware that some of you will not be willing to receive this; but I am aware too, that you cannot disprove this position. What is the true faith, if it be not a belief of truth? The man who believes the testimony of Christ, even though he disobey the gospel, has the true faith; his faith will be of the same kind, should he ever obey, only with this difference; in disobedience his faith is dead; in obedience it is alive or living. Howbeit, it is the same faith that lives, that was dead, just as the same man may be dead and afterwards revive. The man does not breathe when he is dead, and when faith is dead it does not work. But who dare say it is not faith? that it is not the true faith?

Many of our mistakes have arisen from not conside-

ring this matter closely. We have supposed that faith implied or contained in some way a number of other matters, such as confidence, trust, love, &c. But we are talking of faith alone; and if you will think of *faith* and not identify it with some half dozen of other things, I shall not despair of arriving at unity of sentiment with you on this subject. Faith is one thing, and love is another and a distinct thing: yet who does not know, that the christian "faith works by love?" To faith, the obedient person adds a cluster of heavenly virtues, so that in the possession and discharge of them all, he may terminate his course "in the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." Anciently, the believers and servants of Christ, added to their "faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." But I ask if this is the case now? Brethren, is it not, in these two associations, too alarmingly the case, that many, to their faith add notions; and to notions, whims; and to whims, whimsies; and to whimsies, evil-surmisings; and to evil-surmising, evil-speakings; and to evil-speakings, persecutions: and to persecutions, wrath; and to wrath a large quantity of ecclesiastical tyranny and oppression.

The history of Jesus Christ presents us with matters of fact upon which to predicate our faith, and he who believes in Christ, has the true faith: and he who believes and obeys, and he only, has the saving faith. This "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Without hearing the gospel, we should have been as incapable of believing any of its facts, as we are now of telling what those signs were which Jesus performed, that John tells us were not written his book of testimony. But I must devote another number to this subject. I must examine your doctrine of faith.

ART. CRIHFIELD.

## THE GOSPEL—No II.

What is the gospel, is an important interrogation. The gospel of each sect is found in its approved writings or records. The gospel of sectarianism, made up of many sounds emitted by the six hundred mouths of the great monster, is to be gathered from the great mass of one-sided productions extant and harbored by those christians, who like the ancient Gallic and modern African tribes, live by pillaging one another. In like manner the gospel of Jesus Christ, ministered to us by his apostles, is found in that book which has the seal of divinity affixed to it, and particularly concerns Jesus Christ and his kingdom, the New Testament. But there are many other things in the New Testament, among which are found the law of Christ and the history of his disciples. That which the apostles, with divine authority, proclaimed to sinners before they baptised them, embraces the gospel. So reads the commission. Hence the gospel of Christ is found in the apostolic speeches, which we have recorded.

The four historical books bearing the names of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, contain the gospel facts, along with much other matter, yet neither one of them is the gospel regularly written out, but rather they are the evidences by which it is sustained, spread in order before four different communities. The design of each writer, was, obviously, to defend the fundamental proposition of the gospel, viz: "that Jesus was the Son of God," in his book, and as this was a proposition that depended much upon Jewish prophecy and must answer in its configuration, to the texture of the principal features of the Jewish economy, as anti-type to type, and also involved the abolition of that economy; much must necessarily be said in those books, about Judaism and its end. Now all that discussion is not the gospel. In like manner, the epistolary communications, are not particular keys to the gospel, nor were they written with that design, but generally to correct and prevent the recurrence of

abuses of the christian doctrine and practice in the churches. In all of the books in the New Testament, the gospel is often incidentally mentioned and some items of it expressed and enforced, yet we are to look for the whole of it, in its own connexion, in the apostolic speeches addressed to sinners, recorded in the book of Acts and alluded to in the epistles.

Let it be remembered that the gospel was preached by the apostles long before any book of the Testament was written; and that they wrote no book on the gospel, but in every instance had some local reason for writing. Thus Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, adduced severally and wrote out such evidences, being their own testimony, as they thought sufficient to convince the different communities they addressed, that Jesus was the Christ. We have already noticed the epistles.

For a confirmation of the foregoing paragraph, I refer the reader to the commission under which the apostles acted officially, found in the last chapters of Matthew, Mark and Luke. Observe the order of that instrument; preach the gospel to the whole creation, baptize those that believe it, and *then* teach them all things whatsoever I have commanded you. These duties follow in the order of 1, 2, & 3. Here are, the gospel to be *believed*, the immersion to *submit* to, and the laws to be *obeyed*. The commissioned speaker and the hearer had each three duties to attend to. The one, to preach, immerse and teach the law of Christ: the other, to believe, submit and obey. Notice, both the preaching the gospel and the believing it, precede the baptism. Hence we must look for the gospel, the proclamation of the Prince of Peace, who comes to offer truce and terms of reconciliation from heaven, in those speeches addressed by the apostles to unconverted sinners. By the commission, the distinction of the gospel and law of Christ (not the Jewish law) is sustained with equal clearness. This is the "law of liberty." Christianity is not the gospel, but the gospel.

and christian law, taken together, are christianity. The gospel respects faith, the immersion respects submission or profession and the law of Christ respects obedience.

Now having ascertained the place in which the gospel is found, upon examination it will be seen that a few facts or deeds were invariably insisted upon, as embracing the matter of the gospel. It will be interesting to our readers to examine the speeches enumerated in our last essay delivered by the primitive christian teachers, with an eye to this assertion. It is essential to the understanding of any science, that it be reduced to first principles, or that it be based upon some prominent, demonstrable fact. Now as the christian religion was designed for the world, and consequently for men of all capacities, its author chose to erect it upon *one fact*, according to the truth or falsity of which, it must stand or fall. This fact is that Jesus rose from the dead to die no more. Now as this asserted fact is historic, palpable and contrary to nature, the proof must be historic, palpable and of a supernatural or miraculous kind. Such is the gospel of Jesus Christ and such its vouchers.

The one fact of the divine message admitted into the mind and accredited there, the recipient is prepared to regard the authority of every command and institution of Jesus Christ, if he be not a confirmed outlaw, and if he be, he must suffer for it. There is just so close connexion between this one proposition and every part of christianity, that the christian morality, forgiveness of sins, presence of the holy spirit, resurrection of the dead, the future judgment and all blissful future prospects, stand or fall as this proposition is sustained or refuted. The remission, Holy Spirit, judgment, resurrection, &c. are so many links in a chain, with the resurrection of Jesus Christ in the centre, rendering the whole beautiful and permanent, and without which it would be broken and useless. Without the resurrection of Jesus Christ the christian reli-



gion is reduced to a mere system of morals, displaying in perspective no rapturous vision, no golden harvest of the future to elevate the mind, other than the dryness of speculative probability. Who does, who can strike out and extinguish from the land of hope the last lamp of man's existence? I answer, he, who denies that Jesus is the Christ. "Who is he that overcometh the world, but he who believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?" This one fact that Jesus rose from the dead, confirming the truth that he is the Son of God, is to the christian system what the sun is to the solar system, and what the magnet is to particles of steel which it attracts, the associating tie, the combining power of the whole, and concentrating in itself their very existence. Such is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, a star of the first magnitude among the twinkling luminaries in the firmament of redemption. Let the reader carefully examine I. Cor. xv. chap. in which the apostle in the first place asserts that the resurrection of Jesus is a fundamental part of the gospel and afterwards shows that the veracity of the apostles and all christian blessings stand or fall with it.

Jesus was known among the Jews, only as a Jew, before he was manifested at his baptism. Never before that had he called himself the Son of God or wrought a miracle that proved it. John, who acknowledged that he was not good enough to baptize him, because Jesus had no sins, did not know that he was any thing more than his cousin, remarkable for his gravity and piety. See John, i. ch. from 26th to 34th verse inclusive, in which it is asserted that neither John nor the people knew that Jesus was the Messiah, until he was acknowledged by the Father and had received the spirit after he was baptized. This by the way. From this time forth the great question disputed by believing and unbelieving Jews was, "is Jesus the Son of God, the Messiah?" Consequently the proposition that "Jesus was the Messiah, the Son of God," became the foundation of the church, and the fundamental

point in the gospel. So reasoned Jesus with Peter, Matt. xvi. 16, 18, and so asserted Paul to the Corinthians, I. Epistle iii. 11. In due time Jesus died upon the cross and rose from the dead, and as might be expected, some of the Jews disputed it. The apostles risked the issue of all the points in dispute, upon the proof that he did rise, and thus the resurrection of Jesus became the fundamental fact that proved the fundamental truth of the gospel, viz: that he was the Son of God. So much for the great proposition and the great fact.

There are other truths and other facts in the message of salvation, but I wish to be understood as asserting and proving, that Christ made the confession of Peter the fundamental proposition, and that the apostles made the resurrection of our chief the pivot upon which turned both the veracity and efficacy of the gospel.

EDITOR.

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#### INQUIRIES, No. IV.

The Troy Sentinel says that Mr. Jewell had in possession a sythe so sharp, that as it hung on the limb of a tree, in the sun, the shadow of it cut a man's foot half off. Our sectarian brethren have paid a greater compliment, and are in the habit of paying a greater compliment to the divine word than that. They make a partial image or half shadow of the gospel, adequate to the conversion of thousands of souls. Bro. Puritanus acknowledges that his Bro. Methodisticus' gospel converted some hundreds last camp meeting, although every Sunday he preaches and prays against that gospel. Indeed he carries it so far as to use it at every big-meeting, (for it is wonderful in bringing numbers into the fold) although he never ceases firing at it. I say this is saying much in favor of the shadow of the gospel. Now, one would certainly suppose them prepared to laud the gospel itself. I ask, why do our opposing brethren, while attributing so much to the sectarian gospels, never fail to vilify the message of

Jesus Christ, aspersing it with every epithet indicative of imbecility, such as "poor dead letter." Can any one show me the passage that attributes death or weakness to the character of the word of God? Let him do so who can. Would it not be better for christians to make efforts to acquaint themselves with the passages they quote in support of their favorite dogmas? By so doing they would honor themselves and prevent many of the existing difficulties recurring.

Thousands of religious teachers, believe that they are especially called (sometimes by miracles) to preach the gospels they proclaim, and adduce the following language of Paul to prove it: "necessity is laid upon me, yea woe is unto me, if I proclaim not the gospel." Now those that have most effectually succeeded in making their hearers believe their pretensions, are rewarded with large salaries, so that their commission is worth a certain number of dollars. Why do they not "stick to the text," as they operate under Paul's commission, and when pay is denied them, do as he did, "establish the gospel without charge;"—i. e. preach because of the call and not because of the money. Now I am not opposing the commendable practice of remunerating those teachers, who, leaving their business, devote themselves to the good of others the greater part or all of their time, but I just wish to convince my readers that Paul had to preach whether he received money or not, because he was called. For years he worked hard at a trade during the week and preached on Sabbath and Sunday for nothing but his spiritual reward, for necessity was laid upon him. See I. Cor. 9 chap. Now my argument is, that if the modern clergy are specially called as Paul was, they will be compelled to preach, whether the number of hearers and the amount of the salary be large or small. Do all the "called and sent do this? If they do not, the apostle was mistaken or they are. Let the reader judge. The teachers of the ancient gospel hold not to special calls, but conceive it the duty of any christian

to do all he can, as circumstances may dictate; and that when an individual sacrifices all his prospects of gain and support for the service of the body, that he should be remunerated. But yet it is true that no one can consistently claim to be sent from God who neglects to preach for want of pay.

A query to those who profess christianity and acknowledge that Paganism is a wretched abuse of religious sentiment and practice. See the devotion of the heathen! He prays and acts his system every day and often attests his sincere belief in it by his death. Now, according to your concession, a false religion, a wicked and imperfect view of God, (in which there are developed, neither his spirit nor his attributes,) is adequate to move and control the powers of man, in such a manner, that apostacy with its promises, change with its novelties and death with its terrors, are unable to deter the heathen from his religious purpose or devotions. It is to religion, but false religion, that you ascribe this power. Are you, after this concession, prepared to deny to the only perfect and redeeming system of truth the same forceful influence? Methinks christians should plead the superior power of christian morality, prospect, terror and hope in forming human character. If you do, be more devout and sincere, and withal more benevolent than the uncircumcised in heart and the unenlightened in spirituals. Be better than idolators. If you deny that the gospel innately possesses more power than the religious speeches of idolatrous priests, what evidence have you for that denial? Perhaps you answer, no religious communication can control the human mind, until the Holy Spirit (who, according to your objection, sometimes withholds his influence,) gives the impetus. But you see that you are contradicting your first concession, that false religions have influence. Does the Holy Spirit give power to Paganism? Whence then has it its capacity and energy in influencing its votaries and martyrs? The only answer consistent with reason

is, in its adaptation to the design of exciting devotion and religious service; that the spirit of heathenism carried in its representation, gives the impetus. Likewise the spirit of christianity, conveyed in its verbal and written representations, effects the work of translating into the kingdom of the Son of God and transforming into his image.

EDITOR.

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*From the Millennial Harbinger.*

MAHONING ASSOCIATION.

This association held its last meeting in Austintown, Trumbull county, Ohio. Such has been the efficiency of the gospel in the district of country over which the churches of this association are spread, that it has caused to wither almost every sectarianism within and without the congregations composing it. The sects cannot stand before the ancient gospel where fully preached and practised. Those preachers who oppose the ancient gospel in the vicinities, do not only lose their adherents, but they lose the power of converting men to their system. Hence, a visible decline in the power, as well as in the admirers of sectarianism, every where appears in the district of country where the reformation and forgiveness of sins are proclaimed.—To convert men to God, the sectaries have no power when this gospel is proclaimed. In a war between sects, that sect which happens to take with the people, will be most successful. But when the sects array themselves against “the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins,” they are found like Dagon with broken arms and limbs lying before the covenant of the Lord.

Such a meeting was not witnessed in the memory of any present, as was the late meeting of the churches in Austintown. The first day, Friday, was spent in declaring the wonders which God had wrought in various portions of the Western Reserve by the restoration of the ancient gospel. Songs of praise and tears

of joy mingled with these reports, translated us nigher the regions of bliss than we had ever before approached. The next day, finding no business to transact, no queries to answer, nothing to do but "to love, and wonder, and adore," it was *unanimously* agreed that the Mahoning Association as "an advisory council," as "an ecclesiastical tribunal," exercising any supervision or jurisdiction over particular congregations, should never meet again. This association came to its end as tranquilly as ever did a good old man whose attenuated thread of life, worn to a hair's breadth, dropped asunder by its own imbecility.

*"Night dew's fall not more gently to the ground,  
Nor weary worn out winds expire more soft,"*  
than did this association give up the ghost.

The whole meeting was engaged for the most part in addresses from the holy scriptures, in exhortations, prayers, praises, and conversions. More than thirty persons were immersed for the remission of sins upon the ground, and after the meeting several more; making, I think, in all forty-three.

From the intelligence received from all parts of the Association, it appeared that within its bounds, and by the laborers acting under its auspices, during the last year about *one thousand persons* have been immersed for the remission of sins. This has been about the annual average of conversions for the last three years.

After the death and burial of "the Association," it was agreed that all the churches should meet on the Friday preceding the last Lord's day in August next, in New Lisbon, Columbiana county, for worship, and to report the progress of the gospel in their respective vicinities. This meeting is not made a stated meeting, but it will be optional with the brethren then and there assembled, whether, when, and where, to have another general meeting of the congregations in that district of country.

#### REFLECTIONS.

About ten public speakers have been partially em-



ployed in the conversions of the last year. But of these not one has been constantly in the field. More than half the number are farmers. I myself labor occasionally in the Word, and most, if not all, the brethren engaged in this work, either in whole or in part, labor with their own hands for their own support. Besides the assistance rendered by some congregations to their own overseers, the actual amount of contributions to those who rode through the Association, did not much exceed five hundred dollars. \* \* \* \*

The efficiency is in the sword of the Spirit. When used according to the tactics of the Captain of Salvation, it is mighty to subdue the King's enemies. This, and not philosophy and humanisms, is what converts the soul. The people are astonished at its efficiency. It not only converts enemies into friends, but teaches them to live holily and unblameably as sons of God.—It proves itself to be God's instrument, not merely by its converting power, but by its power to form the life anew. Philosophy, whether Calvinian or Arminian, is as feeble in its sanctifying, as in its converting power. The impetus which it brings is too weak to drive a man from the dominion of the flesh. But the argument of remission, immediate, full, and free, through faith in Jesus' blood, and immersion into his name; the love of God thus made sensible, tangible, and accessible to the penitent, purifies and elevates the affections of men above the allurements of time and sense. Hence it is, that the weapons which God puts into our hands, if rightly used, cannot fail of converting men to God, and of reforming their lives.

*"These weapons of the holy war,  
Of what almighty force they are  
To make our stubborn passions bow,  
And lay the proudest rebel low!  
The Greeks, the Jews, the learn'd, and rude,  
Are by these heavenly arms subdued;  
While Satan rages at the loss,  
And hates the doctrine of the Cross."*